



Open Space Report to the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee and the State Bond Commission December 2022

Overview

Section 22a-6v of the General Statutes of Connecticut requires the Commissioner of the Department of Energy & Environmental Protection to submit a report to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to finance, revenue and bonding and to the State Bond Commission each month. The report provides information on the acquisition of land or interests in land by the state, a municipality, water company or nonprofit organization using funds authorized for the Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Program established under Sections 7-131d and the Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program established under Sections 23-73 to 23-79 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program

The Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program provides grants to municipalities and private nonprofit land conservation organizations for the acquisition of open space land and to water companies to acquire land to be classified as Class I or Class II watershed land. The State of Connecticut receives a conservation and public access easement on property acquired to ensure that the property will be protected and available to residents of Connecticut as open space in perpetuity.

One property was funded by the Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program in December 2022. Additional information about the acquisition follows.

Sponsor	Project	Town	Acres Protected
Town of Groton	Watrous Property	Groton	159.79

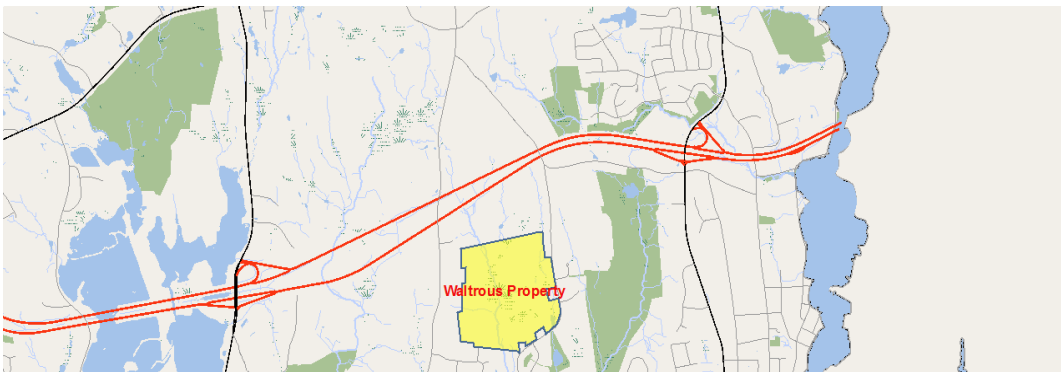
Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program

The Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program is the State of Connecticut's primary program for the acquisition of lands for the beneficial use and enjoyment of the public as additions to the State's system of parks, forests, wildlife, fisheries and natural resource management areas. The program acquires land that represents the ecological diversity of Connecticut, including natural features such as rivers, mountainous areas, coastal systems and their natural areas, in order to ensure the conservation of such land for recreational, scientific, educational, cultural and aesthetic purposes. There were no Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program closings in December 2022.

Town of Groton
Watrous Property, Groton
159.79 Ac. Fee Acquisition



This 159.79-acre property contains Eccleston Brook, a Class A watercourse, and its associated tributaries which flow south through the property and into Palmer Cove. Palmer Cove is a high-quality estuary. Forty-two acres of contiguous wetland surround Eccleston Brook. A DEEP sampling of the brook found a wild brook trout population. Other species observed in the brook include American ell, golden shiner, redfin pickerel, and tessellated darter. A Tier 1 vernal pool on the property provides breeding habitat for Wood frogs, Spotted salamanders, Marbled salamanders, and Fairy shrimp. A study of the vernal pool by a local wetland scientist found over 800 egg masses, 1,000 wood frogs and over 1,000 salamanders over a two-week period during a springtime breeding migration. Acquisition will provide a link between town-owned open space to the north and south and will provide for nearly 200 acres of protected land between Route 1 and I-95. A preliminary NDDB review shows Eastern box turtles and Wood turtles to be present in or near the area. The forest cover is mainly beech, oak and maple. Wetland vegetation includes Red Maple, Swamp Azalea, Common Alder and Northern Spicebush.





Open Space Report to the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee and the State Bond Commission

November 2022

Overview

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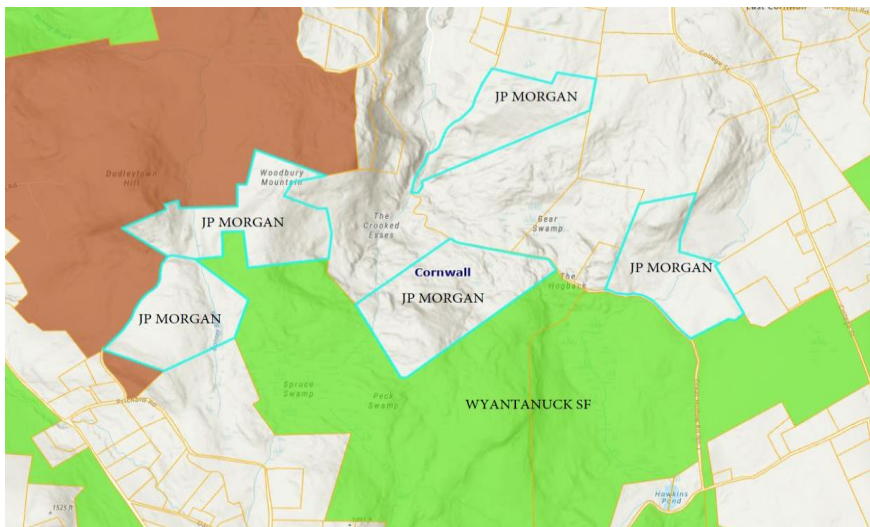
There were no Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition grants funded in November 2022.

Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program

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Property Name	Town(s)	Cooperators & Cost Share	State Share	Acres Protected	Purpose of Acquisition
JP Morgan Chase	Cornwall	USFWS Highlands \$575,500 Private funds \$174,500	\$0	374.98	Addition to Wyantanuck State Forest

J.P. Morgan Chase 374.98 Acres – Fee Acquisition Cornwall, CT



The J.P. Morgan Chase properties consist of the remaining five parcels that were part of a larger project in which DEEP acquired a total of 536 acres in Cornwall. The property is in a rural residential section of town, bordered by large tracts of undeveloped land. The property is mostly forested and are characterized by steep slopes and high mountaintops that drain into various streams that feed into low lying swamps and river corridors that extend between the hills. The lands will be added to the Wyantanuck State Forest and provide enhanced access for passive recreational uses. Funding was provided by a Highlands Conservation Act grant administered by the USFWS along with private donations.

Open Space Report to the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee and the State Bond Commission

October 2022

Overview

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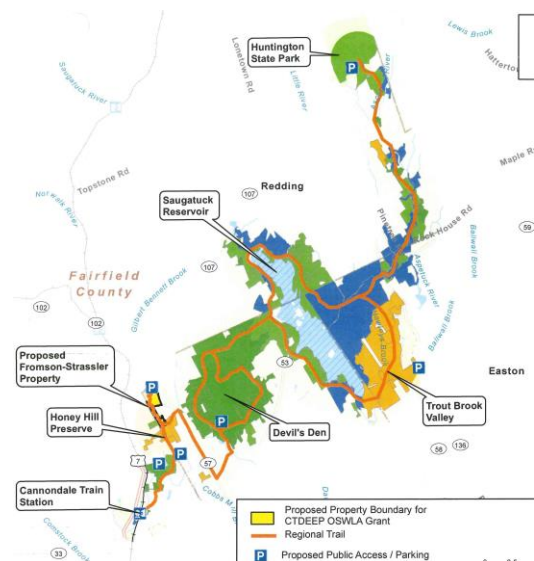
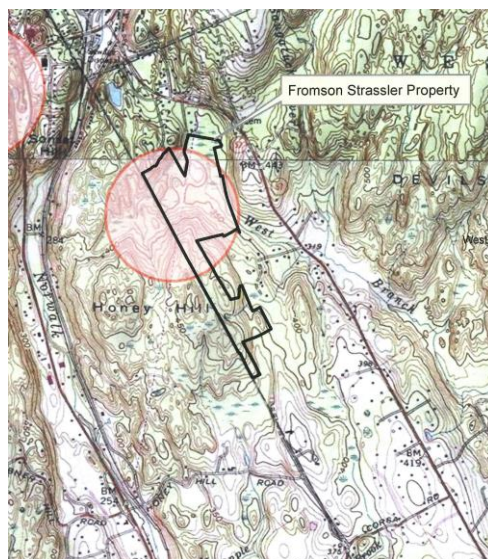
There was one Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition grant funded in October 2022. Additional information about the project follows.

Sponsor	Project	Town	Acres Protected
Aspetuck Land Trust, Inc.	Fromson Strassler Property	Weston	85.879

Aspetuck Land Trust, Inc. (ALT)
Fromson Strassler Property, Weston
Fee Acquisition – 85.879 Acres



This property is adjacent to ALT's 118-acre Honey Hill Preserve. The site is part of a 706-acre assemblage project (the Weston/Wilton Forest Block). There are 5 inland wetlands on this property covering 22 acres. The wetlands on the northern end of the property form the headwaters of the West branch of the Saugatuck River. The American Eel, Chain Pickerel and Black-nosed dace have been collected in the West branch. Migratory bird species and amphibians inhabit the site. A trail head and parking area at the end of Upper Parish Drive will create a link to the area's regional trail system providing access to passive recreational opportunities such as hiking, birding, nature interpretation and photography.



Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program

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There were no Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program closings in October 2022.

Open Space Report to the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee and the State Bond Commission

September 2022

Overview

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There were no Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition grants funded in September 2022.

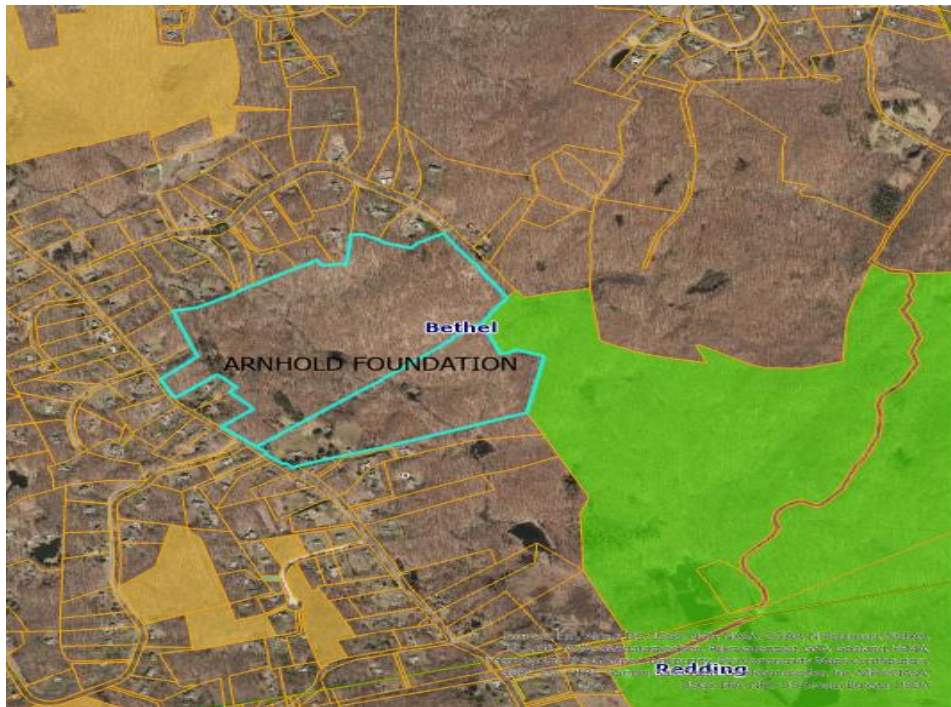
Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program

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There was one Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program closing in September 2022. Additional information about the project follows:

Property Name	Town	Cooperators & Cost Share	State Share	Acres Protected	Purpose of Acquisition
Arnhold Foundation, Inc.	Bethel	None	\$0 Donation	79.35	Addition to Colis P. Huntington State Park

Arnhold Foundation, Inc.
Bethel
79.35 Acres – Fee Donation



The Arnhold Foundation, Inc. generously donated 79.35 acres of open space to add on to the Colis P. Huntington State Park. This spectacular property features rolling hills that are heavily wooded and contain stone walls, wetlands and logging roads that will naturally extend the park for the enjoyment of the public. It is expected this land will make an immediate positive, public impact. The potential additional passive recreation opportunities are boundless with hiking, biking, bird watching, as well as some winter recreation such as snowshoeing.

Open Space Report to the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee and the State Bond Commission

August 2022

Overview

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One Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition grant was funded in August 2022. Additional information on the project follows.

Sponsor	Project	Town	Acres Protected
Ripley, Inc.	Horse Show Meadow	Litchfield	38.57

Ripley, Inc. (a/k/a Ripley Waterfowl Conservancy) Horse Show Meadow
Brush Hill Road, Litchfield
38.57 Acre – Fee Acquisition



This property abuts 110 acres of conserved land to the west and connects Ripley's 150-acre preserve to the north with the 4,000-acre White Memorial Foundation nature preserve to the south. It contains open fields and riparian woodlands. Two branches of Butternut Brook, both Class AA streams, run along each side of the property feeding Bantam Lake. According to the CT NDDb, the property contains alluvial marsh and six species of rare plant and animal species including American kestrel, Eastern meadowlark, New England sedge, Stiff gentian, and Pale green orchid. Thirty-two acres of the property contain USDA Prime or Statewide Important Soils. The meadows are hayed by a local farmer and will continue to be maintained that way after purchase. The White Memorial Foundation, adjacent to the property has over 246 recorded bird species. A hiking trail, boardwalk, and fishing stream will allow the public to enjoy the property. It is accessible from Route 202 and is less than 10 miles from the City of Torrington.

Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program

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There were no Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program acquisitions funded in August 2022.

Open Space Report to the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee and the State Bond Commission

July 2022

Overview

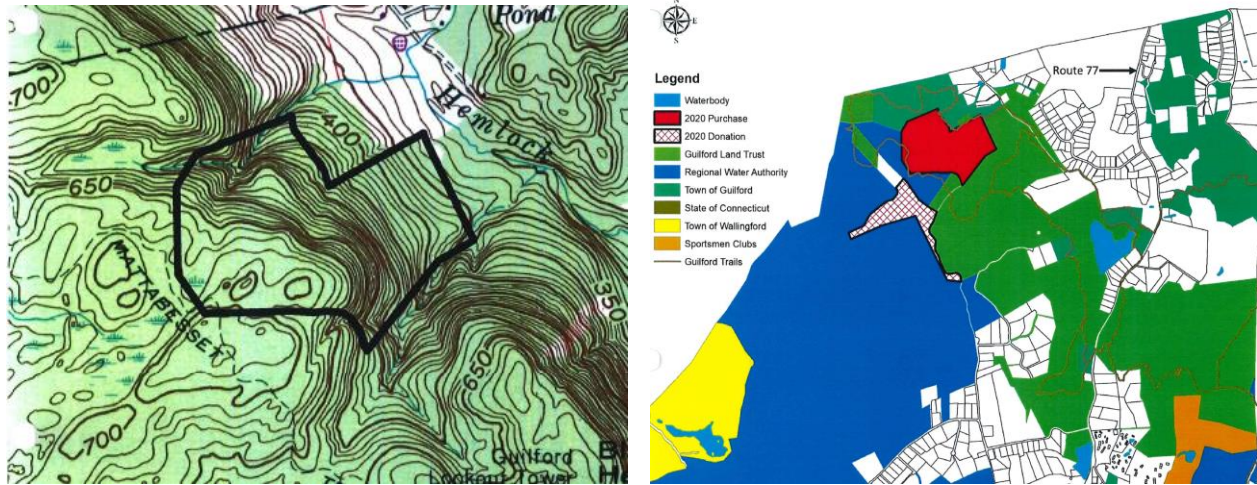
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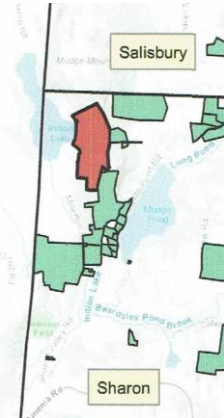
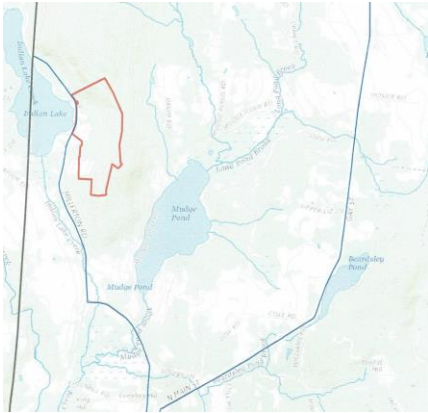
Sponsor	Project	Town	Acres Protected
Guilford Land Conservation Trust, Inc.	Bartlett Preserve / Bluff Head Property	Guilford	80.0739
Sharon Land Trust, Inc	Von Ahn Property	Sharon	175.595
Town of Hebron	Bernstein Property	Hebron	214.2

Guilford Land Conservation Trust, Inc.
Bartlett Preserve/Bluff Head Property, Guilford
80.0739 Acres – Fee Acquisition



The Guilford Land Conservation Trust, Inc. purchased this 80+ acre property (red parcel above) and received, as a simultaneous gift, a nearby parcel to the southeast (hatch-mark parcel above). The 80+ acre parcel contains trap rock ridge within the northern reaches of Totoket Mountain and is part of the Metacomet Ridge, a 100 mile, fault-block ridge that stretches from the New Haven/Branford line at Lake Saltonstall, through the Connecticut River Valley. The parcel is surrounded by 464 acres of protected open space owned by the Guilford Land Conservation Trust, the South-Central Regional Water Authority and the Town of Guilford. Hemlock Brook flows through the northwest corner of the property, the southerly portion contains a wetlands area and the entire property drains into the Coginchaug River watershed. This 130+ acres of unfragmented forest further protects the New England National Scenic Trail (a state designated greenway with a Blue-Blazed trail, managed by the Connecticut Forest and Park Association and 1 of only 11 national scenic trails in the U.S.). The trails are part of the Bluff Head and Northwoods trail systems, having on and off-street parking for public use. This acquisition will ensure that the public can continue to use these trails in perpetuity.

Sharon Land Trust, Inc.
Von Ahn Property, Sharon
175.595 Acres – Fee Acquisition



The Von Ahn Farm lies on the western reach of Indian Mountain off Connecticut Route 361 and rises 600 feet to its peak elevation at 1,200 feet. It contains wonderful view sheds and has almost a mile of scenic ridgeline on Indian Mountain. This acquisition more than doubles the current protection of Indian Mountain and complete a continuous belt of protected land between Indian Lake and Mudge Pond. The 37 acres of farm fields contain USDA Prime and Statewide Important Farmland soils, and 120 acres are core forest, including upland and riparian forested wetlands. There are wetlands and several headwater streams that drain into Indian Lake. The property is contiguous with Sharon Land Trust's 108-acre Goodbody/Paley Farm Preserve. Other features of the property include shrub land, steep slopes and rocky outcrops. According to an NDDB preliminary assessment, 11 State-listed rare species occur on or near the property. Additional funding for this purchase was provided by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service pursuant to a Highlands Conservation Act grant.



View of Indian Lake from Von Ahn Farm

The Town of Hebron
Bernstein Property, Hebron
214.2 Acres – Fee Acquisition



Woods trail leading to Airline Trail



Airline Trail looking south

The Bernstein property is a relatively large parcel of land containing mature forest, agricultural fields in various stages of succession, brook corridors, and wetland corridors. It is located adjacent to the State's Air Line Trail State Park as well as other Town of Hebron Open Space parcels. The southern boundary runs along Judd Brook, a Class A stream that flows into the Jeremy River. The Jeremy River becomes the Salmon River just a few hundred feet from the property's boundary. Eight state listed species are known to occur within or close to the boundaries of the property according to a June 24, 2020 NDDDB preliminary assessment. Frontage on Old Colchester Road will allow for public access via a small parking area and trailhead. The Town of Hebron hopes to establish a small trailhead accessible from the Air Line Trail.



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Open Space Report to the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee and the State Bond Commission

June 2022

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Open Space Report to the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee and the State Bond Commission

May 2022

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April 2022

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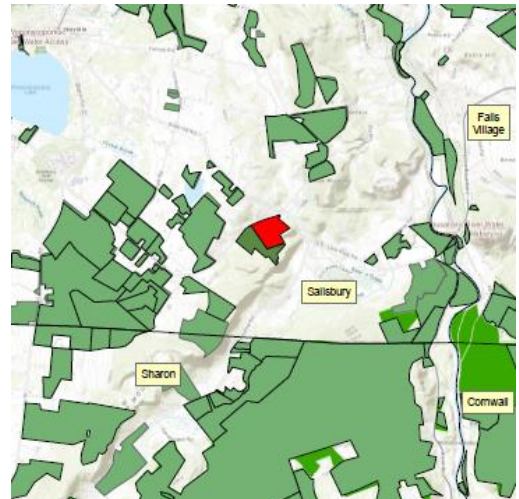
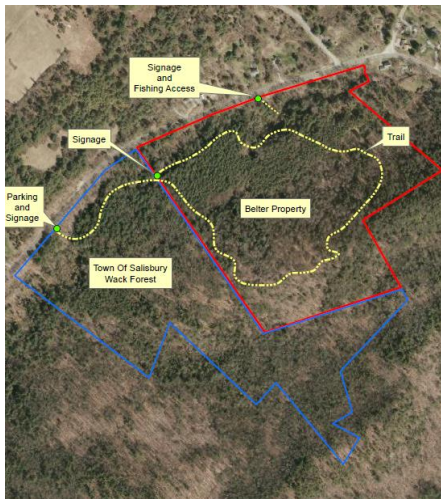
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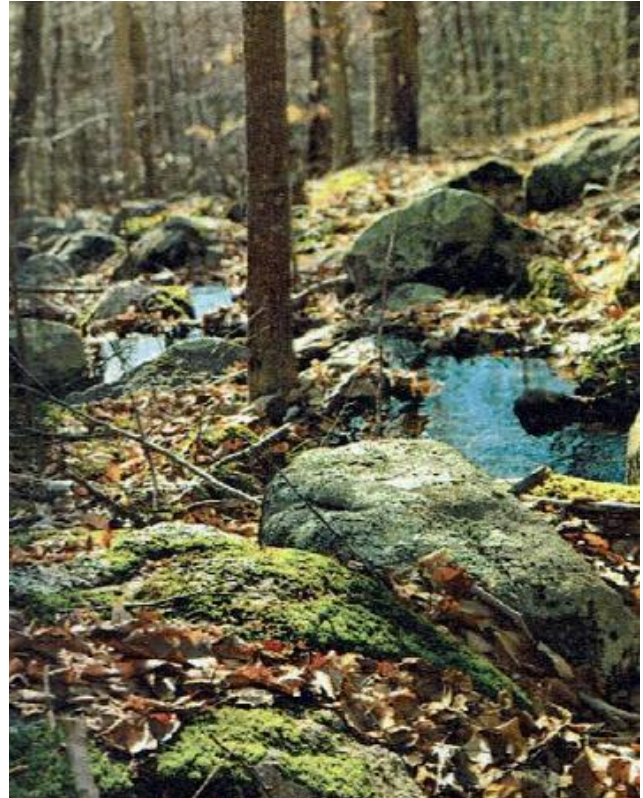
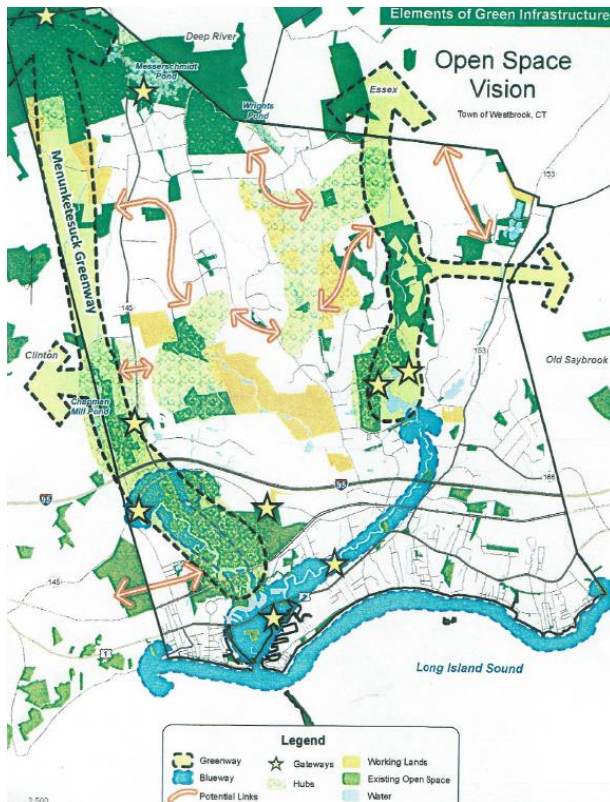
Sponsor	Project	Town	Acres Protected
Salisbury Association, Incorporated	Belter Lime Rock Property	Salisbury	114.387
Town of Westbrook	Toby Hill VIII	Westbrook	130.11

Salisbury Association, Incorporated (SA)
Belter Lime Rock Property, Salisbury
114.387 Acre – Fee Acquisition



The Belter Lime Rock property abuts the Appalachian Trail corridor to the east and the Housatonic State Forest's Sharon Mountain Forest Block to the south and west. It lies on the northernmost ridge of Sharon Mountain and rises to an elevation of 1150 feet. The land has a spring-fed stream that drains to the Salmon Kill and contains 10 acres of surficial aquifer potential. It contains high quality wildlife habitat including core forest, meadow, stream, and steep slopes with bedrock exposures and boulders. An NDDB preliminary assessment indicates that 13 State Listed Species are known to occur within or close to the boundaries. The property is an Audubon-designated Important Bird Area. There is a Subacidic rocky summit/outcrop which is a key habitat of Greatest Conservation Need under Connecticut's Wildlife Action Plan. The public can easily access the property from Route 112 off Route 7, for passive recreation on a planned 1.8 mile loop trail.

Town of Westbrook
Toby Hill VIII Property, Westbrook
130.11 Acre – Fee Acquisition



This parcel is within a 500+ acre block of core forest near other protected Westbrook & Essex Land Trust properties, the Town-owned Toby Hill Woods & Town Forest, and the Preserve (municipal, State & land trust owned), helping to create two greenway corridors. It is a mixed coastal hardwood forest containing oak, hickory, beech, black birches and red maples. The Connecticut Water Company's Holbrook well site is located downstream, which serves more than 2000 homes, business and municipal facilities. The site slopes vary from very steep around Trout Brook to nearly flat on the western side. There are glacial erratics, scenic vistas and a plateau, interspersed with wetlands. The upper reaches of Trout Brook, a Class A tributary, runs through the property and native brook trout have been recorded on site. Storm water draining from Toby Hill VIII eventually reaches the Patchogue River Estuary and Watershed. Possible access areas are from both sides of Toby Hill Road, and the Timberland Drive Terminus. The property will be accessible for passive recreational uses.

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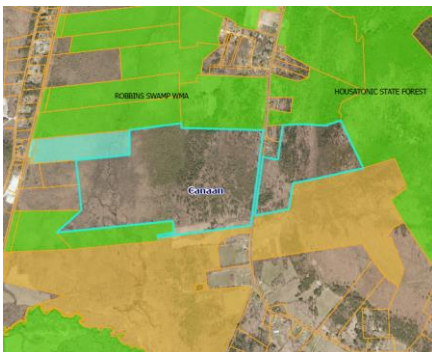
Property Name	Town(s)	Cooperators & Cost Share	State Share	Acres Protected	Purpose of Acquisition
Thomas	Canaan	USFWS Highlands grant \$395,000	\$395,000	269.027	Addition to Housatonic SF & Robbins Swamp WMA

Thomas Property

269.027 Acres – Fee Acquisition

Canaan

The Thomas property in Canaan features two parcels across the street from each other on Route 7 North. The western parcel totals 194.272 acres that are being added to the Robbins Swamp Wildlife Management Area, while the eastern parcel contains 74.755 acres that are being added to the Housatonic State Forest. An incredible diversity of habitat exists across the two parcels. The western parcel of the property includes a northern white cedar swamp along with other calcareous wetland and forested wetland habitats. The eastern parcel rises over 900 vertical feet above the swamp to the ridgeline of Canaan Mountain and includes northern hardwood and mixed hardwood forests, as well as acidic rocky outcrops, with both scrub oak and grassy bald subhabitats. The biodiversity that exists on the property, along with the physical topography make it an important area of resiliency during a time of



Open Space Report to the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee and the State Bond Commission

March 2022

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Sponsor	Project	Town	Acres Protected
Norfolk Land Trust Association, Incorporated	Kopp Property	Norfolk	234.571
East Lyme Land Trust, Inc.	Nehantic Nature Preserve	East Lyme & Montville	301.78
City of Bristol & Environmental Learning Centers of Connecticut, Inc.	Pigeon Hill Property	Bristol & Burlington	64.112

234.571 Acre – Fee Acquisition



This property adjoins Norfolk Land Trust's Hall Meadow Brook and East Branch Headwaters Preserves and is easily accessible via Burey and Winchester Roads. It is a significant link between other large blocks of protected land such as the Great Mountain Forest and Dennis Hill State Park. It contains 210 acres of core forest including upland and forested wetland habitats. The upland forest, slopes, wetlands, and elevations create a wide diversity of habitats, timber stands and terrain that mitigate the impacts of climate change and support many important wildlife species. The NDDDB identifies at least 10 species of rare animals and plants. The property has ponds and wetlands that form headwaters for Lake Winchester and both branches of the Naugatuck River. It is ideal for passive recreational uses as hiking, cross-country skiing, nature study, bird watching, picnicking, fishing, photography, and painting. There is an existing entrance/parking area and trails on the property as well as a small, rustic cabin on the large pond that NLT will convert into a bird observation blind for public use. There will be two trail spurs to the pond, one to the bird blind and one to a fishing spot. Additional funding was provided pursuant to a U.S. Dept. of the Interior, Fish & Wildlife Service Highlands Grant.

East Lyme Land Trust, Inc. (ELLT)
Nehantic Nature Preserve, East Lyme
301.78 Acre – Fee Acquisition



This property is less than ½ mile from the Holmes Road East Lyme entrance to the Nehantic State Forest. It is a large undeveloped forest with a healthy wildlife habitat of whitetail deer, turkey, rabbits, upland and migratory birds and small animals. Surface water bodies include Cranberry Meadow Brook and Latimer Brook, which contribute to the quality of the Niantic River, Niantic Bay and Long Island Sound. A portion of the property contains endangered, threatened and special concern species and significant natural communities. This parcel will provide watershed protection, drinking water protection, habitat protection and passive recreational activities. There are several dirt roads with smooth surface and condition, offering a feasible transition into wheelchair accessible trails.

The figure consists of four photographs arranged in a 2x2 grid, illustrating different stages of forest succession. The top-left photo shows a grassy field with a dense forest in the background. The top-right photo shows a rocky stream with a large tree trunk in the foreground. The bottom-left photo shows a cleared area with a dirt path and a line of trees in the background. The bottom-right photo shows a dense forest with many trees and a path leading through them.



This collaborative effort between the City and ELCC, protects 34.552 acres in Bristol purchased by the City and 29.56 acres in the Town of Burlington purchased by ELCC. The property is part of a 750-acre network of sanctuaries, preserves and education centers run by ELCC, which educates over 20,000 children and adults about nature each year. There are several linkages to existing open space including the ELCC Harry C. Barnes Memorial Nature Center, Sessions Woods Wildlife Management Area, Seymour Park and the CFPA Blue Trail System. Freeman Hill Brook flows through the property and is home to native Brook and Brown Trout. There are wetlands, a 0.6-acre pond, a 45-acre mature, mixed hardwood forest, 9 acres of fields, a glacier esker along the western edge of the property and 15+/- acres of Statewide Important Soils. ELCC plans to extend its existing trail system to this property, providing opportunities for hiking, bird watching, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing and expanding educational programs here for children's summer camp, Boy & Girl Scout programs. The fields currently used for equestrian purposes will be converted to grass and pollinator fields. A gravel mine, abandoned 25-30 years ago, will be developed into shrubland and pollinator habitat.

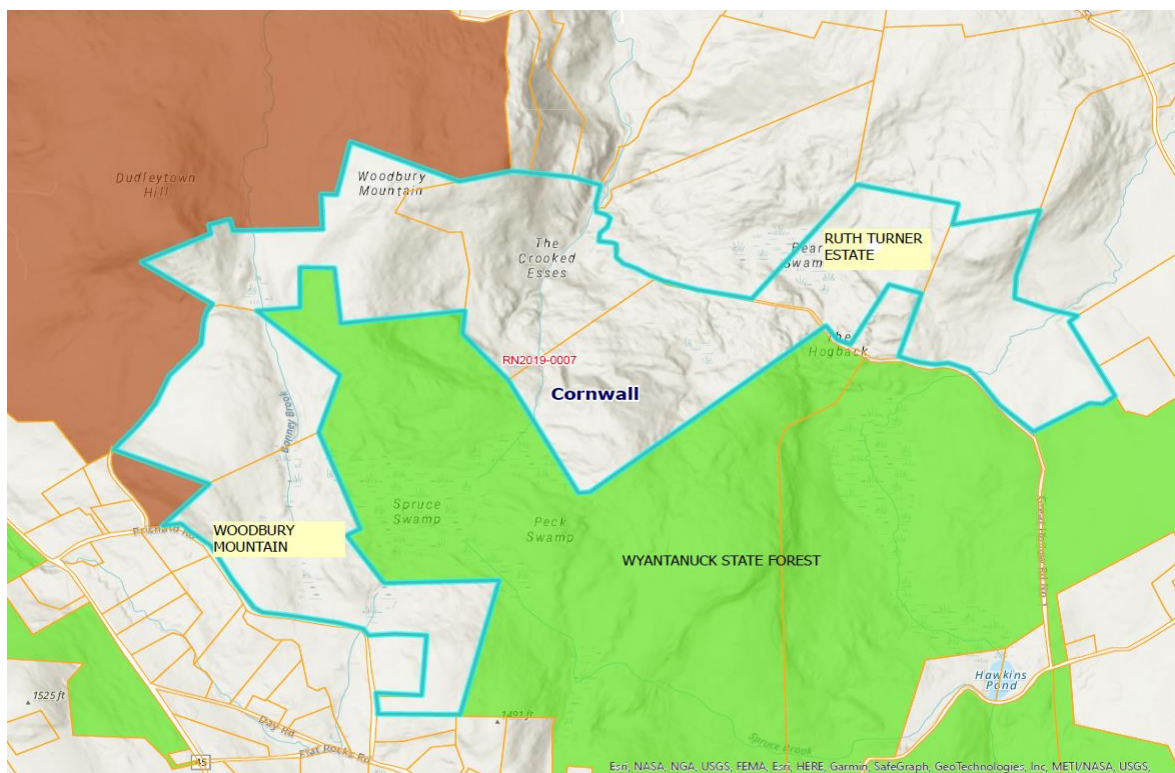
Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program

The Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program is the State of Connecticut's primary program for the acquisition of lands for the beneficial use and enjoyment of the public as additions to the State's system of parks, forests, wildlife, fisheries and natural resource management areas. The program acquires land that represents the ecological diversity of Connecticut, including natural features such as rivers, mountainous areas, coastal systems and their natural areas, in order to ensure the conservation of such land for recreational, scientific, educational, cultural and aesthetic purposes. There were two closings for one Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program acquisition in March 2022. Additional information on the project(s) follows.

Property Name	Town(s)	Cooperators & Cost Share	State Share	Acres Protected	Purpose of Acquisition
Woodbury Mountain, LLC	Cornwall	USFWS Highlands \$560,000	\$0	109.327	Addition to Wyantanuck State Forest
Ruth Turner Estate, LLC	Cornwall	USFWS Highlands \$80,000	\$0	54.709	Addition to Wyantanuck State Forest

Woodbury Mountain, LLC
Ruth Turner Estate, LLC
164.036 Acres Combined – Fee Acquisition

The Woodbury Mountain, LLC and Ruth Turner Estate, LLC properties are part of a larger project in which DEEP is acquiring several parcels totaling 536 acres in Cornwall. The property is in a rural residential section of town, bordered by large tracts of undeveloped land. The property is mostly forested and are characterized by steep slopes and high mountaintops that drain into various streams that feed into low lying swamps and river corridors that extend between the hills. The lands will be added to the Wyantanuck State Forest and provide enhanced access for passive recreational uses. Funding was provided by a Highlands Conservation Act grant administered by the USFWS.



Open Space Report to the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee and the State Bond Commission

February 2022

Overview

Section 22a-6v of the General Statutes of Connecticut requires the Commissioner of the Department of Energy & Environmental Protection to submit a report to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to finance, revenue and bonding and to the State Bond Commission each month. The report provides information on the acquisition of land or interests in land by the state, a municipality, water company or nonprofit organization using funds authorized for the Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Program established under Sections 7-131d and the Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program established under Sections 23-73 to 23-79 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program

The Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program provides grants to municipalities and private nonprofit land conservation organizations for the acquisition of open space land and to water companies to acquire land to be classified as Class I or Class II watershed land. The State of Connecticut receives a conservation and public access easement on property acquired to ensure that the property will be protected and available to residents of Connecticut as open space in perpetuity.

There were no Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition grants funded in February 2022.

Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program

The Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program is the State of Connecticut's primary program for the acquisition of lands for the beneficial use and enjoyment of the public as additions to the State's system of parks, forests, wildlife, fisheries and natural resource management areas. The program acquires land that represents the ecological diversity of Connecticut, including natural features such as rivers, mountainous areas, coastal systems and their natural areas, in order to ensure the conservation of such land for recreational, scientific, educational, cultural and aesthetic purposes.

There were no Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program closings February 2022.

Open Space Report to the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee and the State Bond Commission

January 2022

Overview

Section 22a-6v of the General Statutes of Connecticut requires the Commissioner of the Department of Energy & Environmental Protection to submit a report to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to finance, revenue and bonding and to the State Bond Commission each month. The report provides information on the acquisition of land or interests in land by the state, a municipality, water company or nonprofit organization using funds authorized for the Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Program established under Sections 7-131d and the Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program established under Sections 23-73 to 23-79 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

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Sponsor	Project	Town	Acres Protected
Town of Ridgefield	Bear Mountain Open Space	Ridgefield	13.826

Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program

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Town of Ridgefield
Bear Mountain Open Space
Fee Acquisition – 13.826 Acres



The acquisition of this parcel provides access to a 3-acre parcel of town-owned open space and the 386-acre Hemlock Hills open space preserve. The steeply sloped property is mostly wooded, containing native tree and shrub species including American beech, black birch, hickory, blueberry and mountain laurel. It provides runoff to Miry Brook, which discharges into the Still River in the Still River Watershed.

A parking area, near the end of Bear Mountain Road will provide access to the Bear Mountain trail, which runs along the northern peak of Bear Mountain for approximately 700 feet, affording views of Danbury and northern Fairfield County.

